

FREE DAILY NEWSPAPERS

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Launches	Plans	Readership	Publishers	Research
Metro Czech, Al Dia Dallas, Sweden, 15min, (p. 1-2)	Austria, UK, Spain, Switzerland, (p. 2)	Dublin, UK, Holland, Portugal, City AM, Dose (p. 2-3)	Schibsted, Hong Kong, theSun, USA, Switzerland (p. 3-4)	IFRA-article, PPPC & INMA events (p. 4)

ANALYSIS

Publishing free dailies

A famous saying by a spokesperson from *Bild Zeitung* (Alex Springer Verlag) is "jeder Tag ohne Gratiszeitung ist ein guter Tag" (Every day without a free paper is a good day). One would expect publishers of free papers disliking free dailies very much. This, however, does not seem to be true everywhere. In fact, a substantial part of free papers is published by paid newspapers - in Europe publishers of paid newspapers are responsible for 51% of the total circulation.

Free papers Europe - 2005 (* 1000)

	Circulation	%
Metro	5,046	33%
Schibsted	1,388	9%
Other independents	972	6%
Paid paper publishers	7,771	51%
total	15,177	

Among publishers of paid papers are Bonnier, Sanoma, Associated Newspapers, Telegraaf, Conentra, Ringier, Orkla, Hachette, Socpresse, Le Monde, Independent News & Media, Caltagirone, RCS, Agora, Vocento, Recoletos and Tamedia. Also, publishers of paid papers participate in operations of independent publishers in countries like Spain, France, and Denmark.

In the America's the share of paid paper publishers (Belo, CanWest, Clarin, Quebecor, Black Press, Copesa, El Universal, Tribune Company, Knight Ridder, Washington Post) is even more (56%). The New York Times, CanWest, Transcontinental and Torstar participate in Metro.

Free papers America's - 2005 (* 1000)

	Circulation	%
Metro	1,278	32%
Other independents	474	21%
Paid paper publishers	2,228	56%
total	3,980	

In Asia/Pacific an estimated 46% of the free dailies are published by paid newspapers (News Ltd., Sing Tao, Segye Times, Inquirer and others).

Free papers Asia/Pacific - 2005 (* 1000)

	Circulation	%
Metro	813	21%
Other independents	1,250	33%
Paid paper publishers	1,766	46%
total	3,844	

And yes, also Alex Springer (*Bild Zeitung*) did not only publish a free daily (*Extra* in Cologne) but is also planning a new one for Germany: *Gratissimo*.

LAUNCHES

Two more 15min editions



Lithuanian free daily *15min* will launch editions in second city Kaunas (circulation 35,000) on February 1 and in third city Klaipeda (circ. 25,000) in March. The new editions will have some specific local content. Total circulation of *15min* will be 110,000 after both launches.

Metro Czech national editions



On January 9, two editions of *Metro* were launched in the Czech Republic, covering one third of the country. A further expansion (South Moravia & West Bohemia) is anticipated. These editions were delayed several times. The Moravia & Bohemia editions (150,000 circulation) differ from the Prague edition (circulation 200,000). *24 Hodin* is published in Prague since November (by Ringier) while *Mařa (Dnes)* is also thinking about launching a free paper of their own. (*Czech Business Weekly*)

Metro Sweden to more cities



Metro Sweden has expanded their national (Riks) edition, the paper is now distributed in 67 cities. The national edition raised its circulation by 50,000 to 180,000. According to the latest Orvesto audit *Metro* is now the best-read paper in Sweden with 1.4 million readers. (*Metro International*)

In 17 countries (Sweden first) *Metro* will start online editions, which differ from paper versions. (*Resumé.se*)

Al Día Dallas goes free



Spanish language paper *Al Día*, launched in 2003 by Belo (*Dallas Morning News*), was converted to a free daily on January 23, following the example of *Hoy* in Chicago, L.A. and New York. The paper has circulation of 36,500 and is published Monday to Saturday; a substantial part of the circulation was already free. Belo also publishes free paper *Quick* in Dallas. In the Dallas area also *La Estrella* (Knight Ridder) is distributed for free Tuesday to Saturday (*Editor & Publisher*)



Fox Sport's new monthly magazine *Fox Sports en Español* (circulation 750,000) will also be inserted in *Al Día*, *La Estrella* and *Hoy* (Los Angeles, Chicago, New York) from April 2006 on. (*CNNmoney.com*)

More cities for Metro



Metro's Spanish national edition expanded to 15 more cities in January and is now available in 37 of the 48 provincial capitals. Circulation, however, will not be increased, which probably means that the copies of the national edition distributed before the new launch were not picked up in full. (Metro International)

PLANS & RUMORS

City AM plans expansion



London based business free daily *City AM* is thinking about new editions (or extended circulation) for Edinburgh, Leeds, Bristol, Manchester and Birmingham in March. (*Press Gazette*)

New Sevilla sports papers



The management of Sevilla sports paper *Estadio Deportivo* (85% owned by Recoletos) is thinking about moving to a free model to raise circulation (now 6,200) but also to compete with *El Gran Derbi*, a new sports free paper for Sevilla.

Recoletos also publishes free paper *Qué!* and paid sports paper *Marca*. The company will be printing *El Gran Derbi* as well. (*PRNoticias*)

Metro UK: Liverpool & Cardiff



Liverpool and Cardiff will become the 9th and 10th UK editions of *Metro* (Associated Newspapers) when they will launch in March of this year. Trinity Mirror newspapers will handle local advertising for the new editions as they already also do for Birmingham and Scotland. Both new editions will have a circulation of 25,000, raising total circulation of Metro UK to more than 1.1 million, not including the Dublin edition (circulation 55,000). *Metro* was launched in 1999 in London. (*Mediaweek*, *Holdthefrontpage*)

Free upper-Austrian



After rumors for a new Austrian paper by both Metro and Schibsted (who launched a web portal together with Styria Medien), now the *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten* revealed plans for a new free paper. The publisher mentioned June as a possible launch date because of the World Football Championship in Germany – although Austria did not qualify. Plans for a new paper in upper-Austria by the Fellner media group (*News*) are probably causing these moves. (*Der Standard*)

Vienna's free daily *Heute* has increased circulation to 200,000 and wants to grow to 260,000 later this year. More features and inserts (youth oriented) are planned while the paper is also talking with a foreign TV-partner. Next year the paper will reach break-even. (*Der Standard*)

More Swiss dailies



The French language editions of 20 Minutes for Lausanne and Geneva will launch on March 8. Circulation will be 120,000 – distribution is through 110 boxes in SBB train stations and 300 boxes in other places. Also a website 20minutes.ch will be launched (*Persoelich.com*)

Swiss magazine *Media Trend Journal* (MTJ) reports that there are no less than four different plans for free dailies in Switzerland. Two from *Blick* publisher Ringier who is thinking about a business free daily (*Cash Daily*) or a general free paper (*Der Tag* or *Day!*) that could be launched as an afternoon paper, possibly as a first edition of *Blick*, under the name of *Blick Blau* (Swiss free dailies *20 Minuten* and *Le Matin Bleu* have blue as their marking color).

Other groups that are mentioned by MTJ are NZZ (*Neue Züricher Zeitung*) and the Jean Frey Verlag. According to MTJ *Matin Bleu* will make separate editions for Lausanne and Geneva when *20 Minuten* will launch in those areas in March 2006. Cannibalism for the paying titles of Edipresse after the launch of *Le Matin Bleu* was only 3000 copies according to the publisher. (MTJ)

CIRCULATION & READERSHIP

Destak v. Metro



Free daily *Destak* reached 5.2% of the Portuguese audience (432,000 readers) in Q3 2005, up from 3.4% in Q2. *Metro* reached 407,000 readers (4.9%). These papers are now in 3rd and 4th place in Portugal, after *Journal de Notícias* and *Correio da Manhã*. (*Destak*)

Scoring with Sports



Both *Metro* and *20 Minutes* France want to raise circulation during the world soccer championship in Germany in June and July 2006. New target groups and advertisers are aimed at. Schibsted's *20 Minutes* cooperates with weekly *Sport* and will distribute a special 24 page magazine every Monday from June 12 on with a circulation of 1,000,000. *Metro* will distribute 12 extra pages daily during the championship (circulation 450,000). (*Le Figaro*)

French free dailies realized a turnover of €680m in 2004; €705m is expected for 2006 according to research firm Precepta. (*Nouvelle Observateur*)

UK & Irish December readership



ABC data on the last month of 2005 reveal that 1,010,000 copies of *Metro* are distributed, 76,000 copies of *Standard Lite* and 69,000 copies of *City AM* (the paper claims a circulation of 90,000 in 2006 with 1.4 readers per issue). *MEN Lite* is not audited separately. *Metro* Ireland has a circulation of 55,000 against 63,000 for *Herald AM*.


Herald ahead



According to data from a Millward Brown survey 8% of questioned Dubliners read *Herald AM* against 6% for *Metro* (Associated Newspapers); 44% said to have 'ever' read one of the free titles while 27% did read them in the last week. (*Finfacts*)


Irish public transporter CIE will ask both *Herald* and *Metro* to bid for the right to distribute in train and bus stations. The sum could amount to €1m a year but it is still undecided whether it will be an exclusive contract. Both papers are currently distributed by hand outside bus and train stations. (*Sunday Times*)

Dutch circulation & reach


 *Metro* had a circulation of 358,000 in Q3 of 2005 (389,000 average over 2005 so far) while *Spits* distributed 317,000 daily copies (373,000 average in 2005). (*Hoi-online.nl*)

In terms of audience reach, both papers perform even better. *Metro* reached 12% of the population (13+) and *Spits* 12.5%. These put these papers right after *de Telegraaf* (15.5%) and *AD* (13.4%) in 3rd and 4th place – both paid titles, however, have a much higher circulation. *De Volkskrant* follows on the 5th place with 5.7% although this paper has only a circulation that is slightly lower than that of both free papers. (*NOM Printmonitor*)

Reading Dose

 An Ipsos-Reid study revealed that *Dose's* daily readership is approximately a quarter of a million. *Dose* is reaching 22% of 18-34 year olds on a weekly basis and almost one in ten 18-24 year olds on a daily basis. Over a third of the readers are reading the publication three or more times per week, with an average of 1.8 readers per copy. *Dose.ca* users are visiting the site frequently with 40% visiting the site once a week or more. (*Dose*)

City AM distribution


 New London free daily *City AM* will also be available in business lounges at all four London airports. Also London offices of major companies get *City AM* delivered to their doorstep. (*MediaBulletin*)

City AM is now distributed through boxes and by 150 distributors, the paper is not yet making money according to editor David Parsley, but it will 'surprise everyone' when it does. Main task now is getting website running while there are also thoughts about podcasting. There are almost 30 journalists working for *City AM*. (*Press Gazette*)


City AM was also redesigned with more room for sports, news, jobs and comments. (*MediaWeek*)

PUBLISHERS & TITLES


Profit 20 Minutes down

 Norwegian publisher Schibsted announced that operating profits for *20 Minutes* in Q4 2005 were NOK 60m (€7.4m) lower than in the same quarter of 2004. NOK 34m of this sum can be attributed to the sale of *20 Minuten* Switzerland to Tamedia – the remaining loss is caused by increased circulation and growth in editions in Spain and France. (Schibsted)

20minuten.ch fully staffed


 The web edition of *20 Minuten* (Tamedia) in Switzerland now has already more people working than many free papers for the print edition. The 20 staff members are updating the site form 6 in the morning till midnight – seven days a week. (*persoenlich.com*)

Hong Kong advertising up


 The three Hong free dailies *Metro*, *Headline Daily* and *am730* were responsible for 8% (\$928m) of Hong Kong newspaper advertising (total \$1.6 billion) at the end of 2005. *Metro* is market leader with \$672m, realizing a

growth of 13%. Paid newspaper reported no loss because of the new competition. (*AsiaMedia*)


Moving up at Metro

 Silvio de Groot is executive vice president of *Metro International* since January 1 2006. He will be responsible for operations in the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Russia, Ireland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Italy. He will also operate as director of *Metro Holland*. (*Adformatie*)

20 Minutes v. Matin Blue


 Both editors of the new French language free Swiss papers were interviewed by *persoenlich.com*. Tristan Cerf (formerly *Bild*) heads *Le Matin Bleu* and is convinced that the joint efforts of his paper and paid paper *Le Matin* is effective on the advertising market. Philippe Favre starts in March with the *20 Minutes* edition and wants more than 300,000 readers in this area; also he wants *20 Minutes* more to concentrate on 14 to 35 years old and to contain more local content. (*persoenlich.com*)

Dose & Metro results

 CanWest MediaWorks Income Fund, owner of 26% of the CanWest publications group, reported a 5% increase in revenue over the last quarter of 2005. There was, however, a decline in pre-tax operational profits, partly because of losses from free papers *Dose* and *Metro*. (*Toronto Star*)


Peter Viner, chief executive officer of the CanWest  MediaWorks Income Fund that publishes *Dose*, however, said there were some cost areas that concerned the company, the performance of *Dose* is one of the areas the company is now watching closely.

Baltimore niceties


 Frank J. Keegan will be the first editor of the *Baltimore Examiner*, the free daily by Clarity Media that will be launched in the spring of this year. According to the future competitor *Baltimore Sun*, Keegan was fired from his last job as editor of the *Connecticut Post*, and was also described as 'cantankerous' in an article in the *Fairfield County Weekly*. (*Baltimore Sun*)

I had to look it up, cantankerous means "bloody-minded: stubbornly obstructive and unwilling to cooperate (...) having a difficult and contrary disposition."

24 Hodin Mobil

 New Czech free daily *24 Hodin* (24 Hours), launched in November 2005 by Swiss publisher Ringier (also tabloid *Blesk*) started a mobile platform – information (in Czech) on www.24hodin.cz.

Agora / Orkla

 Polish publisher Agora (free daily *Metro* in Poland) is said to be interested in Norwegian Orkla Media, which controls Danish free paper *Urban*.

Knight Ridder



Dave Price and Jim Pavelich, founders of the *Palo Alto Daily*, a free daily with six editions in the SF-area, which was taken over by Knight Ridder in February 2005, left the company because of the uncertain future of the free newspaper division. After Knight Ridder was put on sale, plans for expanding the free daily concept have been shelved. Price and Pavelich now want to develop the concept of free dailies outside the San Francisco area without Knight Ridder. (*Editor & Publisher*)

theSun Kancil award



Malaysian free daily *theSun* has been named Media partner of the year 2005 at the annual Kancil Awards event. Innovative concepts use by the paper were 4-page wraps in quality paper, belly bands around the paper, stick-ons and product sampling (cream crackers, breakfast drinks) through their distribution network. The paper, its readers and sponsors donated food, medical supplies, sewing machines and boats to Sri Lanka after the tsunami. The full report can be downloaded from *theSun's* website. *TheSun* is the second paper in Malaysia with an audited circulation of 146,000 in 2005. (*theSun*)

Hansson joins Gansevoort



Johan Hansson, formerly managing director of *Metro* North America and publisher of *Metro* Hong Kong, Philadelphia and Warsaw has joined Gansevoort Media, a New York based company specializing in strategic planning and product development in (free) newspapers, magazines and other media business. Other partners in Gansevoort Media are Henry Scott (former publisher of *Metro* New York), Guillermo Fernandez (former marketing of *Metro* US) and John Voelcker (Yahoo Finance & Eziba).

TrainTV competes with papers



Dutch railway operator NS introduced free TV (without sound) on some busy commuter lines in the Netherlands, several companies did bid for the option of broadcasting news and commercial messages – in the end RTL4 (Bertelsmann) won the tender. In some other countries (UK, Sweden) TV is also shown in trains from airports to the city centre. (*RTL4*)



SITE UPDATE

Metrobus Bucharest



Thanks to a Rumanian subscriber we now know that there was a free daily, *Metrobus*, published in Bucharest, probably launched in 2000 but moved to weekly distribution probably in 2001. Publisher at that time was Gruner + Jahr (Bertelsmann) who also owned

daily *Evenimentul Zilei*. In 2004 Swiss publisher Ringier took over both operations; *Metrobus* has an exclusive subway distribution contract and has a circulation of 5,000.

Diario La Estrella Ft. Worth



Since September 8, 2003 *Diario La Estrella* is published in the Fort Worth area by Knight Ridder (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*) as a free daily, published from Tuesday to Saturday. Before that it was published twice a week as *La Estrella*. Circulation was 24,000 in 2005. The conversion took place because Belo (*Dallas Morning News*) launched Spanish language daily *Al Dia* in the same area later that month. This month also *Al Dia* (circulation 36,000) converted to a free model.



RESEARCH

Events

On February 8 I will speak at the PPPC meeting in Montreal, on the 17th of February I will participate in a IMNA/ZMG workshop in Frankfurt and on the 6th of April I will talk at the INMA conference in Chicago about free papers, cheapies, compacts, lites and other innovations.

Publications

The IFRA magazine *Newspaper techniques* of January 2006 carried an article on free newspapers, while IFRA's website www.ifra-nt.com also has extra information on the subject.

Questions & Suggestions:
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